

Bright Futures SCITT

The Lodge, Cavendish Road, Bowdon, Altrincham WA14 2NJ

Inspection dates

10 to 13 June 2024

Inspection judgements

	Early years ITT	Primary and secondary age-phase
Overall effectiveness	Good	Good
The quality of education and training	Good	Good
Leadership and management	Good	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good	Good

What is it like to be a trainee at this ITE provider?

Bright Futures SCITT provides a caring and supportive environment for trainees. Trainees benefit from a bespoke approach to their training, which helps them to successfully build their knowledge through the ITE curriculum. The open relationship between trainees, mentors and the provider ensures that trainees' questions or concerns are resolved promptly. Consideration for the well-being of trainees is at the forefront of the provider's decision-making.

Trainees prosper from the strong relationships that the provider has forged across the partnership. They experience placements in a wide range of contrasting settings. Trainees' learning is further enhanced by well-placed workshops, visiting speakers and trips. Trainees reported that high-quality opportunities to engage with educational networks have deepened their understanding of their wider professional responsibilities.

Trainees value the strong learning community that the provider has created. This enables trainees to share experiences and offer support to their peers, which in turn, encourages them to become reflective practitioners. Through their centre-based learning, trainees develop a secure understanding of educational pedagogies such as adaptive teaching and how to safeguard pupils effectively. Trainees fully appreciate the role of equality, diversity and inclusion in improving the life chances of the pupils who they teach.

Information about this ITE provider

- Bright Futures SCITT is part of the Bright Futures Educational Trust.
- In the 2023/24 academic year, the partnership trained a total of 116 trainees across the early years, primary and secondary age-phases. There were 21 trainees in the early years age-phase and 95 trainees in the primary and secondary age-phases.
- In the early years age-phase, trainees were following the graduate employment-based route towards early years initial teacher training (EYITT).
- In the primary age-phase, there were 34 full-time trainees on the one-year Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) in primary education with qualified teacher status (QTS). Of these, eight trainees were following the three to seven age-phase, 20 trainees were following the five to 11 age-phase, and eight trainees were following the five to 11 age-phase with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Twenty-four trainees on PGCE courses were following the School Direct fee-paying route.
- In the secondary age-phase, there were 49 trainees on PGCE courses in secondary subjects with QTS, including 32 trainees on School Direct fee-paying routes. Additionally, there were eight School Direct salaried trainees who were following the QTS-only route for the secondary age-phase. The PGCE subjects that trainees were training to teach in during 2023/24 were: art and design; biology; chemistry; computing; design and technology; English; geography; history; mathematics; modern foreign languages; physical education; physics; and religious education.
- The PGCE accreditation is provided by the University of Manchester.
- A small number of core trainees were following the QTS-only route in the primary and secondary age-phase.
- The partnership offers an assessment-only route in the primary and secondary age-phases. A small number of trainees were following this route.
- In the early years age-phase, the partnership works with 24 settings across 14 local authorities.
- In the primary age-phase, the partnership works with 49 schools across 10 local authorities, and in the secondary age-phase, the partnership works with 33 schools across 14 local authorities.
- The current Ofsted inspection grades for those settings used, where Ofsted is the inspectorate, range from outstanding to requires improvement.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out by four of His Majesty's Inspectors and five Ofsted Inspectors.
- During this inspection, inspectors held meetings with the chief executive officer (CEO) of the trust, the deputy CEO of the trust, the SCITT director and other leaders with oversight of ITE programmes. These leaders included programme and subject leads for early years, primary and secondary programmes.

- Inspectors also held conversations with members of the partnership advisory board, including the chair of the board. Inspectors met with representatives of the board of trustees and the School Direct partnerships.
- Inspectors met with a representative of the PGCE provider for this SCITT.
- Inspectors met with staff in partner schools and colleges. These included headteachers, senior leaders, professional mentors and subject mentors.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of documentation relating to the ITE programmes. This information included: subject and phase curriculum documentation; trainees' files, assignments and their records of target setting; assessment documentation and mentoring records; and information relating to the Department for Education's (DfE's) ITT criteria and supporting advice.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to the leadership and management of the partnership. This included leaders' self-evaluation documents, improvement plans, quality assurance documents and minutes from meetings of the strategic partnership board and from the strategic development and quality committee.
- The inspection was carried out through in-person meetings, online meetings and on-site visits to partner schools and settings.
- In the early years age-phase, inspectors carried out focused reviews in communication and language, personal, social and emotional development and physical development.
- In the primary age-phase, inspectors carried out focused reviews in early reading, mathematics and the foundation subjects.
- In the secondary age-phase, inspectors carried out focused reviews in computing, design and technology, English, geography and history.
- Across both phases, inspectors spoke with 94 trainees, 56 mentors, 14 early career teachers and four former early years trainees.
- During the inspection, inspectors visited 14 settings and schools.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's surveys for staff and trainees.

Early years phase report

What works well in the early years phase and what needs to be done better?

Leaders have carefully designed an ambitious curriculum for the early years training programme. Trainees acquire new knowledge about the curriculum and pedagogy for young children from birth to age five years. In addition, trainees learn how key stage 1 at primary school builds on children's early years education. Trainees become well prepared for their careers as early years teachers.

The provider co-constructs and co-delivers the training programme with early years settings. Leaders work closely with a regional hub of expertise in early years. Those experts who deliver the training are currently involved in successful early years provision. This means that trainees are exposed to up-to-date practice, thinking and research about early years education.

Leaders ensure that trainees understand the central importance of communication and language for children's lifelong learning. Trainees successfully build on this foundation as they learn how to teach early reading, through systematic synthetic phonics, from the beginning of the Reception Year. Trainees become skilful, knowledgeable teachers of early language and literacy.

Leaders and mentors carefully consider trainees' progress through the training curriculum. For example, they review trainees' written reflections after taught sessions. Trainees gain much new knowledge and expertise leading towards the teachers' standards (early years).

For the most part, the provider checks the learning of trainees effectively. Much of the time, leaders spot and resolve weaknesses in trainees' experiences or progress promptly. For instance, leaders ensure that trainees' targets are appropriate and have sufficient specificity to support further development. This enables trainees to learn well. However, trainees' experiences in their second placement settings do not build well enough on their centre-based training. On occasion, this hinders how well trainees progress through the early years training programme.

Leaders are highly professional and well organised in how they review and develop the quality of the training. For example, they gather frequent feedback, including from trainees. The provider cares deeply about sustaining trainees' engagement in their training. It takes appropriate action to ensure that trainees have a reasonable workload and that placements fit workplace and trainees' needs. Without hesitation, trainees and ex-trainees said that programme leaders care deeply about individual trainees' success.

Leaders draw on their extensive knowledge of young children's development and learning, as well as how adults learn, to provide a rich and worthwhile training programme. Trainees are inspired by their studies and their placements. Their training equips them with the

knowledge and skills that they need to take on their enhanced role in educating young children.

What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the early years phase?

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- Some aspects of the early years training programme are not purposefully integrated across the provider's different settings. This means that, sometimes, trainees' learning in their second placement setting builds less well on their centre-based learning. Leaders should ensure that the early years training programme provides sufficient clarity about what trainees should learn in their second placement settings. This is so that trainees can build their knowledge successfully across the whole training programme.

Does the ITE provider's early years phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?

The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

Primary and secondary phase report

What works well in the primary and secondary phase and what needs to be done better?

Leaders have designed a well-ordered ITE curriculum, underpinned by pertinent educational research, which builds successfully on the DfE's core content framework. Trainees confidently develop their general pedagogical understanding. They understand how pupils learn. For instance, trainees demonstrate their growing knowledge of how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum to support pupils with SEND. Trainees successfully demonstrate their application of behaviour management strategies in their teaching. They are well prepared to enter the profession and to successfully embark on their journey as early career teachers.

Trainees benefit from passionate and knowledgeable subject experts. Moreover, trainees' learning is enhanced by additional activities such as conferences. For example, trainees attend an inspiring diversity conference at the start of the course that prepares them well to think about the different contexts of their school placements. Trainees blossom into highly professional and reflective practitioners.

Trainees in both primary and secondary age-phases develop an appropriate understanding of early reading. Primary age-phase trainees acquire a secure knowledge of the importance of systematic synthetic phonics in helping pupils to read fluently and accurately. Equally, secondary age-phase trainees understand the significance of pupils being able to read to access the wider curriculum.

In the secondary age-phase, the ITE curriculum is purposefully integrated across centre- and school-based experiences. Trainees successfully apply their theoretical learning and pedagogical understanding to their teaching practice.

In the primary age-phase, at times, there is a disconnect between the centre- and school-based learning. Some aspects of the ITE curriculum in the foundation subjects do not build sufficiently well on what trainees have learned previously. Added to this, some primary trainees do not have sufficient opportunities to apply what they have learned about subject-specific pedagogy in the foundation subjects to their classroom practice. This means that trainees in the primary age-phase are not as well prepared as they could be to teach the full suite of national curriculum subjects.

The provider has forged strong relationships with partner schools and is highly regarded. School placements and mentors are extremely well chosen to provide trainees with suitably contrasting experiences. In the main, mentors have the subject-specific expertise needed to successfully support trainees to progress well through the ITE curriculum. Typically, the provider's processes for identifying and addressing trainees' gaps in knowledge over time are strong.

Nevertheless, the provider has not ensured that there is enough clarity about the role of mentors in assessing trainees' ongoing progress, including expectations around target setting and feedback from lesson observations. This leads to some inconsistency in the quality of mentoring and results in some trainees being less clear about what they most need to do to improve further.

Leaders have robust processes in place for checking the quality of the design and delivery of centre-based training. They use this information well to shape and improve the ITE curriculum. However, the systems for checking the quality of trainees' school-based experiences are not as rigorous. Occasionally, this hinders the provider from ensuring that trainees' school-based learning is equitable and of consistently high quality.

What does the ITE provider need to do to improve the primary and secondary phase?

(Information for the provider and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, primary trainees do not have sufficient opportunities to apply their subject-specific learning. Consequently, some trainees are not as well prepared as they could be for teaching the full range of national curriculum subjects. The provider should ensure that trainees have meaningful opportunities to apply their knowledge of subject-specific pedagogy in the foundation subjects in their school-based experiences.
- The provider has not ensured that mentors assess trainees' progress consistently well. From time to time, this prevents trainees from knowing precisely what they need to do to further improve their teaching practice. The provider should ensure that mentors have sufficient clarity about how to assess trainees' ongoing progress through the ITE curriculum.
- The provider does not implement systems that give leaders enough oversight of trainees' school-based experiences. Consequently, leaders cannot be assured that all trainees benefit from consistently high-quality school-based experiences. The provider should enhance its arrangements for quality assuring trainees' school-based experiences. This is to ensure that leaders can identify and react quickly if trainees' experiences fall below the provider's high expectations.

Does the ITE provider's primary and secondary phase comply with the ITE compliance criteria?

The provider meets the DfE statutory compliance criteria.

ITE provider details

Unique reference number	70308
Inspection number	10250093

This inspection was carried out in accordance with the [initial teacher education inspection framework and handbook](#), which sets out the statutory basis and framework for initial teacher education (ITE) inspections in England from September 2020.

Type of ITE provider	SCITT
Phases provided	Early years Primary and secondary combined
Date of previous inspection	22 May and 25 September 2017

Inspection team

Elaine Mawson, Overall lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Tim Vaughan, Phase lead inspector (early years)	His Majesty's Inspector
Jenny Jones, Phase lead inspector (primary and secondary combined)	His Majesty's Inspector
Aly Spencer	Ofsted Inspector
David Spruce	His Majesty's Inspector
Gill Parkinson	Ofsted Inspector
Lisa Woolley	Ofsted Inspector
Michelle Pearson	Ofsted Inspector
Valerie Elson	Ofsted Inspector

Annex: Placement settings and schools

Inspectors visited the following settings and schools as part of this inspection:

Name	URN	ITE phases
St Brigid's Catholic Primary School	104474	Early years
Pownhall Hall School	2670353	Early years
Eagley School House Nursery	EY265410	Early years
Forest Preparatory School	106385	Early years
Elmridge Primary School	138654	Primary
Beaver Road Primary School	140314	Primary
St John's RC Primary School	105546	Primary
Alexandra Park Primary School	135746	Primary
Altrincham Grammar School for Girls	137289	Secondary
Lymm High School	138732	Secondary
Bridgewater High School	141598	Secondary
Golborne High School	106525	Secondary
Chorlton High School	139148	Secondary
Beamont Collegiate Academy	139196	Secondary

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.reports.ofsted.gov.uk.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024